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LATER POEMS.

· HATTIE · HOWARD ·

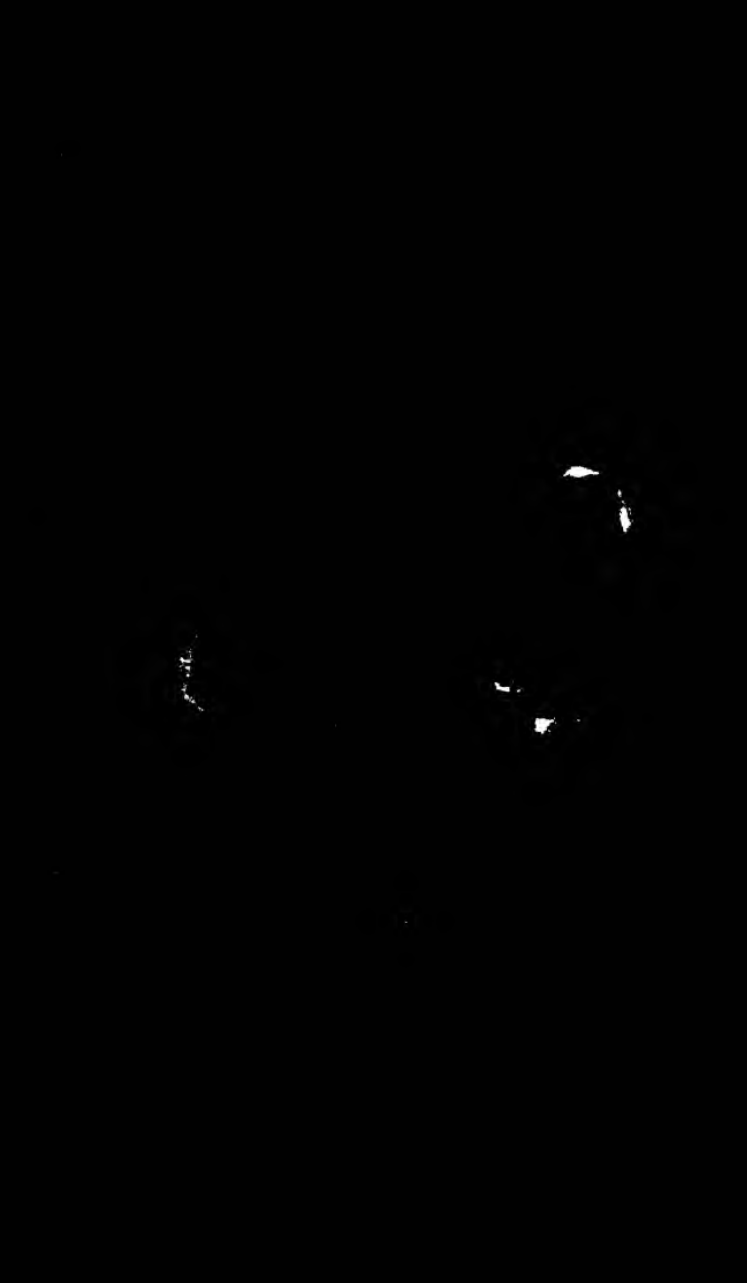
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LATER POEMS

BY

✓
HATTIE HOWARD.

Books and friends O choose with care!
Lest, deluded by the glare
Of their covers, or their looks,
You may some day in despair
Rue your choice of friends and books.



HARTFORD, CONN.
1887.

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BY HATTIE HOWARD.

Press of The Case, Lockwood & Brainard Co., Hartford, Conn.

Dedication.

Companion of the brightest years
That ever spanned the arc of Time,
Affection still to me endears
Thy radiant youth, thy golden prime;
And these alone, in Friendship's name
From me a tribute well might claim.

But I have marked thy long career
Of honest purpose, noble deeds,
While records of thy title clear
A watchful world in rapture reads —
The prestige of an honored name;
And so I pay the debt to Fame.

Dear brother-friend, remembering
Those happy, adolescent days
When I submitted everything
To thee, for worthy blame as praise,
Who kindly turned the poet's leaf —
I offer thee this garnered sheaf!



Contents

	PAGE.
MARCH,	9
GENEROUS GIVING,	11
AMBITION,	12
"BEN HUR,"	13
THE FORTUNE TELLER,	15
PENELOPE,	17
"WATER ON THE BRAIN,"	18
TOO SOON!	20
SLEEPING,	21
TABLEAUX,	22
"HOLY LAND,"	24
BLOCK ISLAND,	27
THE DEAR REMAINING FEW,	28
A GREAT SINGER,	30
SMOKE,	32
WORRY,	34
IF OTHERS WOULD,	35
TUBEROSES,	36
DESTRUCTION OF FLOOD ROCK,	37
INAUGURATION DAY, 1887,	40
"OLD FOLKS,"	42
MY ART,	44
AMID THE CORN,	46
THE DIFFERENCE,	48
AT SEA,	50

	PAGE.
NOT MINE ALONE,	52
ON READING SWINBURNE,	54
"YOUNG SOCIETY-DARWIN,"	56
EN HIVER,	57
EVOLUTION,	58
HIS POTENT PEN,	61
HOW SHE WENT AWAY,	61
"OLD LIBERTY BELL,"	62
THE REASON WHY,	63
CHOOSING A PASTOR,	65
REMEMBER THE POOR,	67
THE ICE PALACE,	68
THE SEA,	70
THE GRANGER,	72
SOMNIUM POETAE,	74
"SUGARING OFF,"	75
LIFE,	78
A GOBELIN TAPESTRY,	79
BEAUTIFUL EYES,	82
A DAY IN ANCIENT ROME,	84
"MAD ROSE,"	88
THE MAKER OF THE BELLS,	90
ADELE,	93
TWO QUESTIONS,	94
WESTERN JUSTICE,	95
THE BEAUTIFUL HAND,	96
TO THE STARS,	98
A NOTED PLACE,	99
INN-HOSPITALITY,	101
LOVED AND LOST,	102
OUR FAULT,	103
"THE MIND CURE,"	104
O WEAR A SMILING FACE,	107
A CRISTMAS FOWL,	108

❖ Poems ❖

March.

March, thou month of varied weather!

Mild and frigid joined together —

“ Winter,” amorous poets sing,

“ Ling’ring in the lap of Spring.”

Full of reckless threat and bluster

Thou, like daring filibuster,

Will not yield thy fitful way,

Though a king dispute thy sway.

Month of terror, storm, and blizzard!

Never work of skillful wizard,

Though in magic unsurpassed,

Surer, swifter than the last.

Period of expectation!

Link between the desolation

And the glory of the year —

Time of roses drawing near.

Monarch viewed in many guises
Giving, as in rare surprises,
While we stand with cold benumb,
Hints of balminess to come.

March, like mortals waxing crazy
For the arbutus and daisy,
Violet and crocus-cup
Round our pathway springing up.

Timidly the grass is creeping,
Daffodils awake from sleeping,
And the long-dismantled woods
Are alive with bursting buds.

Sweetest notes are bluebirds trilling,
Leafless groves with music filling,
To whose tuneful prophecies
Every heart responsive is.

Fickle March ! from thee we borrow
Rays of promise for the morrow ;
For are coming, soon or late,
Perfect days — if we but wait.

Generous Giving.

I read of receptions in salons of fashion,
 Of music, militia, and festival bells ;
 Of elegant banquets that ravish the palate,
 Of beauty, enchantress and queen of the ballet,
 In motion as graceful as dancing gazelles.

I think of Society's doings, and wonder —
 It seems such a foolish and frivolous show —
 If ever were deeds of beneficence fewer,
 If ever a thought of the life that is truer
 Invaded those beings with tinsel aglow.

Then turn for a moment from glittering splendor,
 And into the hovels of poverty go ;
 To meet peradventure the jeweled patrician
 Abroad on benevolent, heavenly mission,
 Whose kindness alone its recipients know.

O never again may unworthy reflection
 Thus picture humanity heartless and gay ;
 For never was more of spontaneous giving
 Or helping to holier, happier living,
 Than brightens the earth to her children to-day.

Yea, hidden by drapery, diamonds, and gilding,
 Do goodness and opulence tenderly keep
 A corner of love for the fortune-forsaken,
 Of pity for those by adversity shaken,
 A tear for the sad who in solitude weep.

Ambition.

I have not wrought for fame or gold,
To gain position, praise, or power,
Nor that I might o'er others hold
The envied vantage of an hour ;
For honeyed compliments that lie
Profuse upon the flatterer's tongue,
Or Fashion's captive butterfly,
No song of mine was ever sung.

I would not dare to while away
In aimless, apathetic mood
The precious moments of a day
Without a care for others' good ;
And thus in Love's unmeasured stint
An undercurrent seems to run —
A wish to bear some helpful hint
Or bit of cheer to every one.

On each impulsive act or word
Whatever merit may depend,
Is shown when one, in spirit stirred
To recognize its honest trend,
Hath been uplifted ; and perchance
In thankfulness and sympathy,
Through lonely space by swift advance
A cordial hand held out to me.

And so for those who know me true,
Who've loved me longest, loved me best,
Because of aught that I may do
In friendly overtures expressed
To brighten Life's short pilgrimage,
Ambition's aim is gratified;
Though culture, lore, and wisdom sage
To me forever be denied.

"*Ben Hur.*"

Scion of an illustrious line
For ages rich in noble blood,
That kept, as 'twere a thing divine,
Its record clear — beyond the Flood!

What were a haughty rival's boast
Compared to thine, of ancient home
And ancestry, whose dawn at most
Coeval was with that of Rome?

Above, not of, the populace!
Born to a prince's proud estate;
But driven from thy rightful place
By harsh vicissitudes of Fate.

Long service at the galley-oar
Thy kingly spirit could not crush;
For Pride in chains than e'er before
Is stronger, though with conscious blush.

What prowess thine, by all admired!
That hedged thine adversary in,
And from "Messala's" grasp aspired
The victor's laurel crown to win.

One moment, friend and confidante,
If lovely "Iras" seemed to thee,
The next, a heart like adamant
Was shown by her duplicity.

The blandishments of cunning art
In Egypt's fairest daughters were,
Beside the love of "Esther's" heart,
Like charms of wicked sorcerer.

Apollo's self in comeliness,
Type of thy people Israel!
In Roman garb, a Jew no less
Who loved his land and kindred well.

O champion of thy hapless race!
Our sympathies were all with thee
In thy desire to see His face
And serve "The King Who Was To Be."

The Fortune-Teller.

“Gypsy, skilled in chiromancy,
Telling fortunes by the hand,
Satisfy my longing fancy —
Answer all that I demand !

“Dark, mysterious clairvoyant !
Is there in my horoscope
Aught to make my spirits buoyant
In the promises of hope ?

“Whisper, soul of divination,
Thou who canst the future see !
Whose the heart in adoration
Shall its queen acknowledge me ?

“Or if woe, not weal, betide me,
And of life’s supremest bliss
Sweet experience be denied me,
What shall take the place of this ?”

Thus a maiden fair and merry,
On her cheeks the roses’ hue,
Lips the deeper shade of cherry,
Did the sybil interview.

“Maiden ! palmistry my art is,
Leagued am I with powers that be,
Known to me the human heart is —
All its guarded mystery.

“ But there’s something in thy beauty,
In thy tone so gay and glad,
Makes me recreant to my duty
As a palmist — I am sad.

“ Not always thus hard and wrinkled
Was the face confronting thine,
And the love-light never twinkled
Once in brighter eyes than mine.

“ Years ago had I a daughter,
Fair and beautiful as thou ;
How I loved, and loving taught her
Evil thought to disallow.

“ This sweet child was rudely taken,
Stolen from my side away ;
I a wand’rer now forsaken,
Seek my darling night and day. ”

“ For her sake no drop of sorrow
Would I pour on thy young heart ;
By the stars, whose aid I borrow,
Hope and cheer would I impart. ”

“ In thy slender palm extended,
Half-afraid my own to touch,
Lines in pink and white are blended
Intricate, expressing much.

“This betokens fame and glory
 Thou art destined yet to win;
 That repeats the ‘new old story’
 All thy hopes are centered in.

“This” — with closer clasp she caught her —
 “Aye! that mark I know too well —
 Eloise! my long-lost daughter!”
 As she tottered, swooned, and fell.

Wond’ring that such mood befell her,
 Tenderly they raised her head;
 But, alas! the fortune-teller —
 She, the gypsy-queen, was dead.

Penelope.

With new delight again we’ve read
 The story of Penelope —
 Her patient weaving of the thread
 Into a fabric, fair to see,
 Whose consummation it is said
 Should seal at once her destiny.
 Her task was ever just begun;
 For artfulness as promptly spoiled,
 As soon as each day’s work was done,
 The textile web at which she toiled
 From early morn till set of sun —
 And thus her anxious suitors foiled.

O, baffled courtiers! ye who sued
A hero's loyal wife to gain!
For untold centuries ye have stood
As targets for the world's disdain;
While she, a queen beloved and good,
Is honored still in Virtue's reign.

Let modern suppliants profit by
The lesson, efficacious still
Though learned, alas! with face awry;
That impolitic, imbecile,
And "born to rue" are they who try
To circumvent a woman's will.

"Water on the Brain."

'Twas morning; in the Orient
The primal rays of daylight shone
Till field and forest's dim extent
Took on effulgence, form, and tone;
Anon the mountains' misty sides
In far perspective glistened bright
As darkness vanished, that divides
As with a curtain day from night.

The thrifty farmer, quick astir
At Chanticleer's familiar notes,
Doled out to each dumb servitor
His daily share of corn and oats;

And letting down the pasture-bars
 Advantage gave to lowing kine,
Impatient as untrained hussars
 To break the ranks of fodder-line.

Then from his ring-streaked, brindled pets,
 Upon a triple-legged stool
He sat, extracting creamy jets
 To swell the liquid lactage-pool
Within the pail; and spryly stepped
 From each to each, and did not bilk
Till all were vacuous — except
 The cow that gave the buttermilk.

This frothy fluid, looking pure
 As snowy flakes from Heaven's dome,
By thirsty city epicure
 Was guzzled in as bovine foam
Excelsior — until one day
 The cattle, splashing through a bog,
In some unheard-of, wondrous way,
 Let in the milk a spotted frog

For so the trembling dealer said,
 Confronted by his customer,
Who bade *him* gulp it down instead
 Of shamefully deceiving her;
Alas! his produce he might “brook,”
 But could not brook a woman's scoff —

So with a jerk the can he took
And tossed its mingled contents off.

Of course *he* never told the tale —

But enterprising rivals say
Who thrive on his deserted trail :

“He perished by the ‘Milky Way!’”

But, with opinions formed with care,

Are others who the case explain

In cruel jest — for they declare

“’Twas only water on the brain !”

Too Soon !

A modest violet, azure-eyed,

Stirred 'neath its dark, protecting mold,

And whispered, “Why, it can't be cold !”

To the slumb'ring daisy by its side ;

“For I am sure I hear the tread

Of gentle Spring above my head !

“Her touch is making all things bright —

For where the snow was wont to drift

Upon our bed, a widening rift

Lets in the blessed, glad sunlight —

And I can feel the atmosphere

So warm, I know that Spring is here !

“I hear a voice that seems to say,
As from some far-off vernal bower,
‘Come forth, thou earliest Spring flower!’
It sounds so like the voice of May,
I think I’ll just peep out to see
If any one is calling me!”

And so she did — sweet innocent! —
Not knowing that above the ground,
Grim “Old Jack Frost” was prowling round
With footstep light, on mischief bent;
And, lo! — he nipped her from her stem
While north winds sang her requiem!

“Too soon!” cried Daisy, in her bed:
“The early worm is always caught!
Just see what poor, dear Violet got!
I’ll not be quite so fast!” she said —
“But I’ll appear at a later hour,
And be the earliest Spring flower.”

Sleeping.

A little crib I sat beside,
And watched two stars at eventide
That silken lashes drooped to hide;
I hummed a song and softly stepped,
And in the dark my vigil kept —
The stars were out — the baby slept!

Tableaux.

The handsome Spanish artist brought
From his enchanting land by night,
His pictures — a bewitching lot,
Done all by hand — in pink and white ;
An “Indian Girl,” a masterpiece —
We mean a *miss* — terpiece, was placed
On exhibition — with a crease
Half way between her chin and waist;
At which we marveled, much afraid —
For he was such a taking chap —
The charming portraiture was made
While she was sitting on his lap.
Next came the “Japanese,” admired
By all, from lovely top to toe
In shining tinselry attired,
With eyes cut bias, sleeves to flow ;
We took her in until she fell —
That is, the artist pulled her down —
And then we saw the stunning belle
Who captivates and sways the town.
When “Expectation” came in play
As graceful as a waterfall,
We recognized her by the way
She hung herself upon the wall —
O, dear ! what language does convey —
Of course, she didn’t hang herself !

She sat — or stood — the border lay
With her — inside — upon a shelf ;
Can't anybody understand ?

So much explaining takes up time,
And "Time is Money" — and we've planned
A thousand ways for every dime.

Then later, in that very frame,

In closest jam — a perfect squeeze,
The "Merry Wives of Windsor" came
So tight they didn't dare to breathe ;
Who was old Windsor, anyhow ?

Like Brigham Young — an awful "Saint" —
With wives the law did not allow,

Who choked them into meek restraint ?
But then they looked so innocent,

And seemed to like the Mormon plan,
To have and hold, and be content

With but the fraction of a man ;
We saw "Justitia" serene,

Who on a tub stood upside down —
Oh ! why, of course, the tub we mean —

Now do not criticize and frown !
Had she with honest balance weighed

Her audience, we do aver
This statuesque, imposing maid

Had found that all were wanting — her.
The manager, with ready wit

That never yet was known to fail,

Convulsed us by the happy hit
Of offering the gems for sale ;
Which made "the pictures" pout and groan,
When, to avert the war he'd waged,
He said in more emollient tone
That they were "nearly all engaged."
Old "Castle Garden" showed a scene
That all who've seen it understand,
For "Jean Crapeau" and "Erin" green
With "Sauer Kraut" were hand in hand ;
The "Singing School" wound up the show
With baton flourish grand and fine,
And when the people rose to go
The curtain fell on "Auld Lang Syne."

"Holy Land."

Delectable "Holy Land !" magical book !
In thy pages enchanting, I lingering look,
And oft am transported in rapture, to dwell
In the midst of the scenes thou portrayest so well.

With thee, I have crossed the broad ocean, and seem
To behold every valley and mountain and stream
That burst on thy vision, and thrilled thee with joy,
And a memory left, Time can never destroy.

Historic Old England I've traversed, and stood
Beside sculptured tombs of the great and the good ;
And oft, in Earth's corners neglected, have found
Lone graves that must ever be hallowed ground.

The steep Alpine track I have climbed without fear,
While the sound of the avalanche greeted my ear ;
And, surmounting those crowns of perpetual snow,
Looked down on the beautiful valley below.

From the top of St. Peter's magnificent dome
In silence surveyed the vast city of Rome
With thrilling emotions, and tried to recall
Her glory and grandeur, her pride and her fall.

Beneath me were streets that once echoed the tread
Of conquering armies — and there captive led,
Brave Paul, though in fetters rejoicingly trod,
And sealed with his life his devotion to God.

I've been awed by the Sphinx and the Pyramids, while
Ascending the sacred, mysterious Nile,
That still floweth on through green valleys, as when
In Egypt ruled Joseph — a prince among men.

I've wandered where Thebes, of historic renown,
That once of the civilized world was the crown,
In desolate ruins, seems sadly to say,
Earth's grandeur and glory thus yield to decay.

But the wish of my heart, my life-dream was fulfilled,
And with sacred emotions my spirit was thrilled,
When my gaze rested first on the valleys so green,
Of that holiest land upon earth — Palestine !

There in sweet meditation I “walked by the sea”
Oft blest by His presence — O, bright Galilee !
And a beautiful picture my memory fills
Of a mirror, encased in a frame-work of hills.

I have climbed to the summit, and cannot forget
The memories that cling around thee, Olivet !
What scenes have occurred in Gethsemane’s shade,
Where Jesus hath knelt, and in agony prayed.

I’ve “walked about Zion,” and lingered to see
The spot where Redemption was purchased for me ;
And shared in the deep-thrilling awe that awaits
The stranger who enters Jerusalem’s gates.

All the teachings of childhood came over me, when
I followed where He, the dear Saviour of men,
“Went about doing good” — for wherever He trod,
Are recognized still — the foot-prints of God.

O glorious Land ! that has witnessed the birth
And the death of our Saviour — no land upon earth
More favored than thou — and till life shall depart
Of thee, blessed memories shall dwell in my heart.

Block Island.

Oh ! billow-chafed and wind-swept isle,
Engirt by rugged seas ;
Forsaken by the traveler,
Forgotten by the sojourner,
Bereft of beauty's grace and smile
And summer indices !

An ocean-field with ice afloat
Thy crystal setting is ;
The shifting floe, for daring feet
That holds but danger and deceit,
Erewhile that rocked the pleasure boat
And fed the fisheries.

Through many a league of bleakest space,
The ray that never dies,
From storm-beleagured Pharos' light
On fair Montauk or Watch Hill height,
Of sail and sailors show no trace
Beneath the wintry skies.

As once the bold, intrepid Kane,
Hero adventurous,
For weary months environed lay
A prisoner in an Arctic bay,
So thou art bosomed in the main —
A frigid nautilus.

O lonely isle! the very wave
That, like a gem impearled,
Shall hold thee sparkling on its breast
In bud and bloom and verdure dressed,
Enfolds thee now as in the grave —
Cut off from all the world.

The Dear Remaining Few.

The touch beneficent of Spring
Shall clothe the hill and vale and plain
With verdure, bloom, and everything
That makes this world a fair domain;
But none of these can gladness bring
To our sad hearts, or wake the strain
In other days we used to sing —
Days that will never come again!

Though rich and beautiful her dower
As ever graced an earthly throne,
Still desolate the fairest bower
If we must walk therein alone;
Or pass a solitary hour
No friendly hand to clasp our own;
Can song of bird, or hue of flower
Make up for one dear face or tone?

With heavy pinions hovering,
It seems that Death is in the air,
The whole bright world o'ershadowing ;
For friends are falling everywhere,
To whom, departed, still we cling ;
Life's promises were all so fair,
And in their presence comforting
We took no note of time or care.

Around the crumbling walls of clay,
Their home from ours that now divide,
In summer-time shall children play
And lovers walk at eventide ;
While anguish words cannot portray,
Our hearts must bear, too oft allied
To futile questionings why they,
In grace and beauty, should have died.

O Angel dread ! whose wings have fanned
The cheeks that bore the roses' hue
With blighting power, whose fateful hand
Sweet lips has touched, like poison-dew —
Behold ! a few yet proudly stand
Beside us, brave and strong and true !
Though but a remnant of our band,
O spare the dear remaining few !

A Great Singer.

The tears were dropping softly down
Upon my polonaise —
A velvet vine-embroidered gown,
A “Dolly Varden craze” —
When through the door a little maid
Came with a timid rap,
And looking up in wonder laid
A pansy in my lap.

“Don’t cry !” she said, and turned away,
And I saw her not for years,
Whose presence like a sunbeam lay
Across the path of tears ;
Till in a Western town one night
Amid a rapturous throng
I sat beneath the calcium light,
To greet the queen of song.

The debutante, that gifted child,
Had been beyond the sea,
And learned to trill the linnet’s wild,
Sweet notes of melody ;
Had caught the prima donna’s role,
Marchesi’s pupil apt,
And caroled till her tuneful soul
Grow tremulous and rapt.

Not Jenny Lind nor Malibran
Sang more divinely sweet,
Or held, as only divas can,
Adorers at their feet ;
That heavenly maid Calliope,
Among her worshipers,
Had been distraught with jealousy
To hear a voice like hers.

But while the world in homage bowed
To recognize her gift,
I only saw a sable cloud
Through which a golden rift
Of sunlight cleared the mists away ;
And standing in the gap
Was she who laid, on that sad day,
A pansy in my lap.

O cantatrice ! sing for aye,
And still be good and kind
As when with childish naïveté
My sorrow you divined ;
And for your Fame-crowned womanhood,
While dear affection swells
With thoughts of “ Auld Lang Syne ” renewed,
Accept Love’s immortelles.

Smoke.

'Twas a zero morn, and the air was keen
As a glittering blade of Damascene,
And gathering frost on the window told
An icy tale of the piercing cold ;
From savory viands that formed the base
Of the matin meal — and a whispered grace —
I watched the vapors curling away
From a thousand flues in the morning gray,
And thus to my jubilant *vis-a-vis*,
Who like a comet eclipses me,
With sudden thought impetuous spoke :
“ Why, what becomes of the clouds of smoke ? ”

Do they center and form those misty piles
That drink in light like beautiful isles
On the boundless face of the sea of sky ?
Or low on Orion, like shadows nigh,
Untold anathemas bringing down
For tingeing astral castles brown,
Do they tell star-dwellers what earth must be
By its dense, exhalant impurity ?
That light and grace and bloom we lack,
Our globe is drear and our skies are black,
Earth's denizens never bereft of a tear
Because of the poisonous atmosphere ?

Or away on some old plantation ground
Where freedmen's cabins cluster round,
And Dinah's bit of tinder stuff
Emits one feeble, flickering puff,
Do fumes of Northern wood and coal
With Southern exhalations roll,
And like the clasp of friendly hands
Above those reunited lands
In mingled waves suffuse the air —
And, like the blessing after prayer,
Descend on grass-grown battle plains
In winter snows or summer rains ?

Do they circle away in vanishing lines
To rest on the tops of sougning pines
In the wilderness where the moose-deer roams
As wild as Zulus in Afric' homes ;
Where anglers revel encamped about
The limpid haunts of the speckled trout,
Where the lumber-camp and woodman's axe
Efface the wild opossum's tracks ;
Where Androscoggin's waters sweep
A mighty pathway to the deep,
And honest Dow and Statesman Blaine
Adorn like stars the brow of Maine ?

Or are they wafted, soon or late,
To El Dorado's " Golden Gate,"

And tossed about by every gale
That rends Pacific's stoutest sail,
But redwood giants move no more
Than Zephyr's breath the iron door?
Perchance like *nebulæ* awhile
They hang o'er Santa Barbara's isle;
Precursor of discomfort hid
In the weary heart of the invalid,
To whom the months' incessant rain
And sunshine's loss is added pain.

O wandering vapors! like the breeze
That rocks the navies of the seas —
To intermix with London fog
The city's arteries to clog,
Or dimly veil the face serene
Of proud Britannia's sovereign queen —
Though North or South, or West or East
Diffusing like the foamy yeast,
O errant vapors! lost in space
Like shreds of fine illusion lace,
To other worlds bear not the joke
That *ours* is wreathed in tobacco-smoke!

Worry.

Contentment reigning in the heart
Knows never fuss nor flurry;
It is not work that wears one out
But everlasting worry.

If Others Would.

If other human beings had
The goodness that is his,
The tender love and sympathy,
The winning courtesies,
This world would never be the vale
Of sorrow that it is.

If other mortals would extend
A helping hand to those
Who, by untoward Fate, endure
Misfortune's cruel blows,
Prosperity and happiness
Would blossom as the rose.

If others would but learn of him,
In hearts of gratitude
Who must forever be enshrined —
O, if they only would,
Each in his own appointed place
Might do a world of good !

No preacher nor philosopher,
Nor saintly acolyte,
More clearly understands that Earth
Cannot be Eden quite —
And yet he bears a cheerful part
In setting it aright.

Tuberoses.

O rarest of flowers ! that seem to exhale
On the stillness of air, or the breath of the gale,
All effluent odors in botany shrined ;
The volatile essences richly combined
Of orchis diffusions, deliciously blent
With lavender, orange, and balsamine scent.

No jessamine chalice or hyacinth vase,
No mignonette-perfumed or blossoming space
Of violets redolent, dewy and sweet,
With delicate fragrance is half so replete,
As one of these exquisite florets that hold
The cream of aroma in waxen-like mold.

There's a "Flowery Kingdom" way over the sea,
The home of the Mongol, the "heathen Chinee"—
But *why* this cognomen of fanciful sound
Applies to their bit of terrestrial ground,
No pundit can tell, be he ever so wise,
And chance if Confucius himself could surmise.

But Yankees, quick-witted and willing to guess,
Are equally ready and free to confess —
By "coolies" imported who slavishly toil
As cheap as the dirt on American soil —
That every known spot where a Chinaman dwells
Is held in remembrance — because of its "smells."

And so, to preserve our dear continent free
 From Eastern effluvium, what can there be
 More potent and lasting in counter-effect,
 The dainty olfactory sense to protect,
 Than lovely tuberoses, ambrosial and rare,
 In fine distillations suffusing the air ?

And as in the ocean when refuse is tossed,
 By free salination impurity's lost,
 So these liliaceous corolla-cups bear
 In happier living a recognized share ;
 And prove their beneficence, beauty, and worth
 Refining, adorning, and sweetening earth.

Destruction of Flood Rock.

O restless man ! unsatisfied
 With Earth whence sprung thy parent-tree,
 Upon whose branches far and wide
 Hang jewels of thy pedigree,
 Fair scions touched with family pride
 That marks their true heredity !

Doth not this mundane planet, graced
 With light and bloom and beauty sweet,
 By its Designer firmly placed
 Beneath thy own inconstant feet,
 Respond to thy fastidious taste,
 Or its requirements kindly meet ?

The cascade leaping from its source,
A crystal spring upon the hill,
Becomes a mighty water-course
Subservient to thy slightest will,
And gives of its unfailing force
To guide the loom or turn the mill.

The monarchs of the forest bow
Beneath the sturdy woodman's axe,
The glebe unrolls before the plow
A furrow for the yeoman's tracks,
And science from the mountain-brow
Discerns a planet's parallax.

The billowy sea, that danced and laughed
And man's dominion long defied,
Bears on its bosom princely craft —
Palatial ships that proudly glide ;
Or flying sail that breezes waft
With speed that rivals time and tide.

Yet combating alike rebuff
Or ridicule, unlimited
Is man's ambition — not enough
The scope of his victorious tread
Till ocean-reefs, sea-chafed and rough,
Are riven in their stony bed.

A little hand so soft and white
Impels the swift electric spark,
The hidden fuse that shall ignite
In submarine recesses dark,
Which like a flash of Heaven's light
Goes straight to its projected mark.

As if the dreaded Typhoon gale
Had vexed the spirit of the main,
Uprose an instantaneous wail
Of subterranean rage and pain ;
As when that ancient temple-vail
By power divine was rent in twain.

As if 'Titanic power lay
In youth's dexterity and grace,
Or as a giant would convey
Neptunian rocks through airy space,
So scattered fragments leagues away
Of sunken ledges wrenched apace.

Rejoice, O mariner ! to thee
Shall " Hell-Gate " nevermore present
An obstacle that may not be
By man's devices circumvent,
Till hither vessels ride as free
As Arab from his desert-tent.

As calm succeeds the tempest's roar,
 So elements are reconciled ;
Now, conqueror of sea and shore,
 Since " Peace on Earth " again hath smiled,
Be thou contented evermore
 And led — as by a little child !

Inauguration Day, 1887.

Ascending smoke from countless flues,
 Like floating nebulae,
Hung over snowy avenues
 As trackless as the sea ;
Where rural lane and city street
 Unbroken stretches lay,
Beneath the sun that rose to greet
 Inauguration Day.

Inspired by fife and drum,
 Militia bands enrolled,
From office, bench, and counter come
 Like minute-men of old ;
A glittering retinue, who led
 The chosen ruler's way
With serried ranks and martial tread,
 Inauguration Day.

Not fairer was that world renowned,
 Suburb Pantheon dome,
That like a storied temple crowned
 Antique and classic Rome,
Than Hartford's stately edifice,
 In festival array
Like some enthroned impératrice,
 Inauguration Day.

Proud Capitol! in chiseled grace
 Like beauty's sculptured queen,
Environing in council space
 A grand impressive scene,
That angels must have thrilled to see;
 Who registered for aye
Those solemn vows of fealty,
 Inauguration Day.

As governors thus come and go,
 May each unsullied be
And wear like garments of the snow
 The robe of purity;
In fair Connecticut—our State—
 May rectitude hold sway,
And love of justice consecrate
 Inauguration Day.

“Old Folks.”

Mysteries of election day
Yet had scarcely cleared away,
Ere attention all was drawn
To a strange phenomenon —
Wondrous transformation rare
Happening at our fancy “Fair.”

In the twinkling of an eye —
Not a shade of reason why —
Rosy maidens, laughing-eyed,
Ruddy youth, our hope and pride,
All their bloom and freshness lost —
Like carnations nipped by frost.

Heads as suddenly grew white
As if due to awful fright,
While the sobriquet “Antiques”
Rose from costume’s crazy freaks;
For such robes, put on at dark,
Might have come from “Noah’s ark.”

Spirit full of revelry,
First appeared in ecstasy
She whose ruff and spacious dress
Marked the days of good “Queen Bess” —
While our modern queen took on
Style of “Martha Washington.”

"George " was hanging round near by —
He who could not "tell a lie" —
When the "flour-pot," he said,
"Had been emptied on his head,"
We believed him, — for we knew —
By his locks — it must be true !

Charmed by "Jacob's " fluent tongue,
To his arm, confiding, clung
"Rachel " — saucy, sweet, and quaint —
Far from being solemn saint !
Even in grandmother's cap,
Still admired by many a chap !

Could it be that "fourteen years' "
Alternating hopes and fears,
Waiting for his "Rachel " fair,
Thus had bleached out "Jacob's " hair —
Carved his alabaster skin,
Put those extra wrinkles in ?

Clad in antiquated rig,
Snowy cue and periwig,
Polished, graceful, well at ease,
Prodigal in arts to please, —
Who'd have thought that courtly man
Was "our bashful, modest Dan ?"

Thus, in highest style of art,
Each so well assumed his part

In fantastic, odd disguise,
That we scarce could recognize
One of that capricious set
Whom an hour before we met.

Sweet delusion ! born to last
Only till the " Fair " had passed !
For with morn's succeeding dawn
Every trace of age was gone ;
While the " box receipt " supply
" Our piano " helped to buy.

My Art.

As if my unpretending rhymes
Publicity might ever claim,
Or echo rapture as in chimes
Resounding from the bells of Fame !
I never dreamed of such renown,
And only wrote because my heart
Provoked the same resistless frown
Whene'er I tried to fetter art.

The solemn grandeur of the sea,
The beauty of the summer sky,
The song-bird's revel, wild and free,
In rhythm spake to ear and eye,
Till melody possessed my soul ;

And Poesy, as if astir
The measured numbers to control,
Became its meet interpreter.

And other hearts that throbbed as mine,
Intensified and thrilled no less,
Grew covetous of every line
So facile-traced that could express
Their undivulged, unuttered thought ;
And praised each lyric pseudo gem,
And gratefully the singer sought
In metric strains who sang for them.

I have not borrowed of the books
That teach symmetric, polished phrase,
Nor delved in musty, classic nooks ;
Nor dared to penetrate the maze
Of Concord's deep philosophy —
And Buddhist fallacies I hate ;
For never shall *my* Heaven be
An aimless, vague, Nirvana-state.

But narrow-sphered to critic sight,
Have I with true, unsullied pen
In kindness essayed to write
As one who loves his fellow-men ;
And when my gift persisted in
Hath wakened some accordant note,
It hath to me sweet solace been
And Sorrow's potent antidote.

As use and polish render bright
The rusty cimeter of steel,
So poor endowments turned aright
An unsuspected grace reveal;
And thus I dream, and feel, and know
That in celestial atmosphere,
To full fruition yet shall grow
The bud of talent lent me here.

Amid the Corn.

When roasting ears are peeping through
Their silken tassel curls,
When corn leaves glisten in the dew
Like ribbons strewn with pearls;
When Phœbus' splendor is revealed
And gilds the summer morn,
I love to walk the furrowed field
Among the rows of corn.

It brings to mind those vanished days
In adolescence sweet,
When through familiar seas of maze
With ardent, childish feet
That never tired, the glebe I trod
The "hired man" to warn
Where grew the tares, or where a clod
Obstructed hills of corn.

A happy home upon the farm
In memory holds a place,
That city life with all its charm
Can never quite efface.
O give me back the days of yore!
When I, a farmer born,
In pantalet and pinafore
Grew up amid the corn.

O that I could to nature true
From etiquette relax,
And follow, as I used to do,
Papa's unerring tracks!
A scholar, who could wield the pen,
Whose honors well were borne,
Was he — this noblest, best of men —
Who plowed and hoed the corn.

I'd rather be, though dumb and droll,
An effigy to-day,
A man of straw upon a pole
To scare the crows away,
Than like a figure fashion-spun
A palace to adorn,
Disdainfully look down on one
Who works amid the corn.

The Difference.

Love is no restricted part
Of a woman's trusting heart,
Balancing in like degrees
Other traits and qualities,
Like a "corner lot" of bliss
In its guarded edifice ;
'Tis her very life wrapped up
In the secret treasure cup
Of her soul — its vital sense
Holding proud pre-eminence
Over every other thought ;
'Tis a ray supernal caught
From effulgence round the Throne —
"God is Love" — and He alone.

Love in man is little more
Than a ripple passing o'er
The deep current of a life
With untold diversions rife ;
Either knotty points of law
All his aspirations draw,
Or resistless struggles he
With some new theology ;
Or, as children play with blocks,
Notes the rise and fall of stocks,

Fraternizes "bulls and bears,"
Speculating unawares
Till his soul in not a cleft
Hath for love a "margin" left.

Maiden with the blooming cheek,
But a word to thee we speak;
If a man shall say: "To you,
O, my love! my heart is true
As the needle to the pole —
Day-star art thou of my soul!
If thou look disdainfully
On my suit, repelling me,
All the solace that I crave
Shall be this — an early grave —
And the finale to thy scoff,
My untimely taking off!"
Do not on his words rely —
Just for love men never die!

But, creation's lord, if thou
Cherishest a mutual vow,
Do not, we admonish thee,
Let the monster jealousy
Drive thy sweetheart to despair;
Tempting her to say: "Beware,
Faithless one! do not forget
Love shall be requited yet;

Glistening on yonder green
Shall a double cross be seen;
Since thy perfidy I've known
I will die — but not alone!"
O believe her — sure as fate
She will do it — soon or late!

At Sea.

The victim of miscarried plans,
This rueful self, as all may see,
A pouting "ward in chancery,"
Perforce abideth yet on lands
As hot as arid desert-sands;
But that immortal spirit-part,
Mine *alter ego*, longing heart,
Whatever it may be,
Is far away at sea.

Like unspent geysers pours the heat,
O'erflows its crucible of brass,
Makes crispy sward of verdant grass,
To lava-beds converts the street,
And sears the soles of tender feet;
While dear copartners wonder much
If this intense caloric touch
Affects my fancies free —
O never! I'm at sea!

What though the torrid atmosphere
This "too, too solid flesh" transform
Into a compound soft and warm,
And sad companions drop a tear
O'er one who lies unburied here!
It is not I — I'm on the wave —
In cool circumfluence I lave
And pure felicity,
A nereid of the sea.

Seek I a kingdom? 'tis the main!
Where I may smile at billows high,
The vortex of the deep defy,
Consort with him whose potent reign
Encompasses the watery plain;
Or with admiring, ardent eyes
Behold the glorious sunset skies,
In rainbow mystery,
That beautify the sea.

Mais il est mal à propos though,
That some resistless, secret art
Hath forced the spirit to depart;
For everywhere I chance to go,
That is — this empty shell — I know
That friends who value my caress
Remark my absent-mindedness,
And wish the soul of me
Were not so far — at sea.

Not Mine Alone.

The landscape, that in verdure glows
With all the freshness of the rose,
In myriad forms of beauty, throws
 A spell of rapture o'er me ;
As like a queen upon her throne,
From lofty parapet alone
I view, admire, and call my own
 The hills and vales before me.

Yes ; all is mine, of beauty wrought
By superhuman skill and thought —
A priceless heritage, which naught
 Can wrest from my possession
While satellites in splendor shine,
And joyous sounds, and prospects fine,
On every thrilling sense combine
 To make their true impression.

In rare, pellucid atmosphere,
Through tangled boughs afar I peer —
Receptacles of hidden cheer
 In fruitage, ripe and ruddy ;
Like odd designs in arabesque,
Though wild, fantastic, and grotesque,
Presenting scenes so picturesque
 I fain would pause to study.

Might awaken deep unrest ;
Fire the blood of one possessed
Even of a royal crest,
 Scion of a kingly line.

Thine is matchless eloquence —
 Thou a benefactor born !
As, endowed with prescience,
Thou dost search out vain pretense
'Neath the garb of innocence,
And in true benevolence
 Hold it up to human scorn.

Does that winged steed Pegasus —
 He who threw Bellerophon —
Risky as a blunderbuss,
Frisking round so mischievous,
Ever show his animus
Mettlesome, and hazardous
 To thy safety, Algernon ?

As enchanted we peruse
 Stanzas rich in polished lore,
Envy we the power that woos,
In Parnassian interviews
With thy generous patron muse,
Favors none knew how to use
 Half so gracefully before.

Who so prodigal to thee?
King of meters, tell us, do!
Is it fair Calliope —
Goddess eloquent is she —
Or divine Melpomene?
Tell thy secret, so may we
Importune the muses, too!

For, O Swinburne! to thy height
We — poor publican afar —
Downcast and despairing quite,
Dare not lift our eyes, but smite
On our bosom day and night;
Thou the sun in splendor bright —
We, not even a tiny star!

“Young Society-Darwin.”

In vestments fine, the latest plan,
The tailor had arrayed him;
His low-necked jacket, light rattan,
And staring lens betrayed him;
But in our hearts we never can
Find language to upbraid him,
But try to call this thing — a man!
Because the Lord hath made him.

In parting benison benign
The sunset glow, like mellow wine,
Irradiates this wealth of mine

With marvelous refulgence ;
Like that a mortal blest perceives
On "one of those ambrosial eyes
A day of storms so often leaves,"
To crown its wild indulgence.

The aureole, o'er field and town,
Might tempt a wandering seraph down
To view that iridescent crown

Whose brilliance so enchants me.
I can but wonder if it be
The splendor of reality,
Through some supernal agency,
Or due to necromancy.

All beauty, charm, and novelty
Beneath the sky, is not for me
Alone the heritage ; for he

Who hath an ear to hear it,
Or eye to see — it matters not —
With true esthetic ardor fraught,
May claim whatever God hath wrought
For eye, and ear, and spirit.

And who, with highest sense endued,
From boundless riches, oft renewed,

Would choose the best of all that's good,
Will find his chief employment
In lonely haunt, or busy mart,
In searching out that valued part;
To treasure it within his heart,
A well-spring of enjoyment.

On Reading Swinburne.

Poet! thou hast wondrous art,
Rare as necromantic skill!
Thou canst touch the coldest heart,
Life and love to it impart,
Make the crystal tear-drop start
As, unchained, thy fancies dart
Hither, thither, at thy will.

Words but playthings are to thee —
Which like happy child among
Thou dost revel fearless, free,
Leaping oft the boundary
Of conventionality,
By the strength of imagery
In thy metric mother-tongue.

Taken at thy very best,
There's a "lilt in every line"
That, in rude plebeian breast,

En Hiver.

Le long de la rue neigeuse,
Dans la saison rigoureuse,
Je passe souvent,
Tout oubliant la tempête
Qui frappe autour de ma tête
Furieusement.

Sans peur, sans souci, sans peine,
Je marche comme une reine,
Essayant avoir
L'air bon ; rencontrant l'orage
À bras ouverts, mon visage
Éclatant d'espoir.

Sous son tapis blanc la terre,
Une grande mer de verre,
Quand vient le printemps
Fleurira comme la rose ;
Nous donnant beaucoup de cause
Pour contentement.

Parmi la neige à l'aurore,
Ou en regardant la flore,
Je me satisfais ;
Car l'étoile d'espérance
Peint le ciel de l'existence
Le teint violet.

Evolution.

Ho, everybody ! an hour purloin
From time's brief distribution
Of leisure moments, just to join
The "class in evolution."

To all the world tuition's free —
A school with no defection,
No begging for admission-fee,
And better, no collection.

Did love for geologic laws,
The all-prevailing passion,
Lead us ? Oh, no ! we went because
To go was all the fashion.

For we had loved to stare at stars
On some ambrosial even ;
Or, through the moonlight's argent bars,
Look longingly to Heaven.

Or, far removed from haunts of men,
This mundane sphere forgetting,
Admire that distant sky-land when
The golden sun was setting.

Then, presto ! what a fall was there !
As landed 'mid the strata
Of subterranean regions, where
The darkness dims the data.

In eloquent, unwritten speech,
Defying skill of sages,
To read what rocks so grandly teach
About the vanished ages.

How wonderful ! that science can
Bridge o'er the mighty chasm
Between the dear, developed man
And shapeless bioplasm.

Yet, every mite that ever groped
Before or after Noah
Is classified and microscoped,
And labelled "Protozoa."

By evolution laws we find,
Though dimly comprehended,
That vertebrates of human kind
Are from a worm descended.

Again 'tis said — does logic fall ? —
Because we've heard a dozen
Times, at least, that every whale
Is our primeval cousin.

Propounding theories like these
Nobody seems to bother ;
And we may choose whate'er we please
For our revered forefather.

Imagination runs away —
For what is there to hinder,
When all the wise logicians say
That water is a cinder ?

In his most lucid interval
Did anybody think it —
That aqua, too, is a mineral ?
And so, how dare we drink it ?

So marvelous and plausible
Are these advanced ideas
Unto a world already full
Of ills — and panaceas, .

And all explained in tones as clear
As softly tinkling cymbal ;
Not sounding brass beguiles the ear,
But cultured Mr. Kimball.

But, touching our ancestral tree,
Our filial doting spirit
Resents the thought, and sighs that we
Were ever born to hear it.

By turns we scowl and smile and grieve,
Then grow severely spunky ;
Because we *never will* believe
That man — was once a *monkey* !

His Potent Pen.

A power was his unique and strange,
That held the world entranced ;
Beyond whose utmost, loftiest range,
By easy flights advanced,
He soared, and wrought amid the stars
The diction that no blemish mars.

He touched his pen and moved so free —
Because he willed it so —
The waves of Thought's tremendous sea ;
Whose ever-widening flow
Still circled in controlling reach
Of purpose marked by polished speech.

What was it lay in a bit of steel,
A nib of gold, or quill,
That made the world accordant feel
As touched with tender thrill ?
Why, only this — his potent pen
Was dipped in love for his fellow-men !

How She Went Away.

We bade her good-night, looking into her eyes
Already that shone with celestial surprise,
And when we returned — a brief interval-space —
A beautiful angel had taken her place.

“Old Liberty Bell.”

O, Liberty herald! thy echoes I hear,
As down through the century, year after year,
The resonant voice that our forefathers knew,
Triumphant and thrilling, still loyal and true,
In pæans rings out o’er the land that we love,
Proclaiming good-will to the people thereof.

In thy reverberations sonorously mix
With the patriot spirit of Seventy-Six,
The soul, that seems wafted from some distant shore
As if intervening, rough seas passing o’er,
Of “Old Independence,” obedience to God,
Resistance to tyrants at home and abroad.

From the bosom of Earth wast thou, Liberty Bell,
In crude metal taken, and fashioned so well,
And by skillful artificer given a tongue
In the City of Brotherly Love that first rung,
As Victory’s bright, starry pennon unfurled
To the uplifted gaze of a wondering world.

Old Liberty Bell! though corroded with rust,
And choked and half-buried ’neath undisturbed dust,
And haplessly cracked on that memorable day
In overstrained efforts to greet Henry Clay,
Thy clarion notes of the past resound yet,
Recalling the days we would never forget.

Now, Liberty Bell, on thy way to the South,
Thy history travels before; every mouth
Can the story repeat of the stirring events
That led to the birth-day of Freedom — and hence
To our proud elevation, and paramount worth —
Admired and honored all over the Earth.

May favors auspicious thy wand'rings attend,
And greetings fraternal from Northern hearts blend
With those of our neighbors, till courtesies kind
Shall "many in one" so harmoniously bind,
That in jubilant tones shall thy aged tongue tell
Of a country united, O Liberty Bell!

The Reason Why.

The bobolink and oriole
Are wild with blithesome singing;
Each pouring out his happy soul
In gleeful notes beyond control,
Till melody is ringing
In forest, field, and orchard gay
With countless blossoms' rich array.

The pendant leaf is never still,
The bending twigs are dancing
As if in rapt, accordant thrill

With every fresh, spontaneous trill
From tuneful throats, enhancing
The gladness and the glory of
Sweet May, the month that warblers love.

Hilarious lad and romping lass,
Alert in vigor bounding,
Come unawares in meadow grass
On many an interwoven mass
Of fibers fine, surrounding
That little world where bird and mate
In hope exultant watch and wait.

Thus every nest, half-hidden by
The verdure round it growing,
A home reveals — explaining why
So gaily sing and lightly fly
The feathered songsters ; knowing
That in their promised fledgeling brood
Shall song and rapture be renewed.

So, like the birds, the heart doth sing
In dulcet tone and meter,
That hath some fond, endearing thing
'Round which its tendrils twine and cling ;
So is existence sweeter
To one who holds in cherished thought
Some love-encircled, home-like spot.

Choosing a Pastor.

Now this is what the deacon said :
(May blessings crown each saintly head !)

“ For leagues around we’ve sought to find
Some one to fill the place
Who shall our hearts together bind ;
An honest man as God designed,
With earnest purpose, cultured mind,
And liberal share of grace.”

Then anxious parents had their say :
(Whose scions claim the right of way !)

“ Before the winning flag unfurls
We clamor for the youth ;
’Mid business cares, in social whirls
We cannot train our boys and girls —
Before them, *he* must scatter pearls
Of wisdom and of truth !”

The young men exercised their brains :
(And for a while forgot their canes !)

“ We want a man about our size,
A manly, whole-souled, genial chap,

Who, though he may have won the prize
In Greek and Hebrew exercise,
Can catch a base-ball as it flies,
Or wear the umpire's cap!"

The lovely maidens shook their curls
And said:—(Oh, my! what saucy girls!)

"Now we won't have a pastor prim
Or grave, with carping tongue!
He must be handsome, tall, and slim,
Our cavalier in twilight dim,
And we'll lay down our lives for him—
Of course, he must be young!"

The populace at large chimed in:
(Who dodge the missiles aimed at sin!)

"He may be prophet, king, or priest,
A 'Tabernacle Saint'
Who has his congregation fleeced,
For aught we care—but this at least
We want—an intellectual feast
Without sectarian taint!"

Thus everybody aired his views
About the kind of man

Our wealthy, cultured church should choose
To wear our "Reverend Idol's" shoes ;
But no one dreamed he might refuse
To come, and spoil our plan.

In course of time we half agreed
A certain man might do,
Who seemed to apprehend our need ;
But, though particular indeed,
It never entered in "our creed"
That he might be so, too.

And so, at last, we gave a call
To him that, to our mind,
Appeared embodiment of all
That we had hoped for — pretty, tall,
Whose many virtues might appall
The careless world in evil thrall ;
In eloquence, bereft of drawl ;
As copious as a waterfall,
Whose bump of avarice was small,
Whom we believed adept at ball ;
And he — why, he — declined !

Remember the Poor.

A far greater blessing to us 't will insure,
And a mansion in Heaven will help to secure,
If we have in kindness remembered the poor.

The Ice Palace.

In crystalline splendor a sight to behold,
It rose like Jerusalem's temple of old ;
 No sound of a hammer was there,
But block upon block, from the ice-harvest cold
Dissevered and chiseled in exquisite mold,
 Made up its proportions so fair.

Within its broad galleries gracefully wrought,
As solid expressions of fanciful thought,
 A million of luminous beams
More brilliant than stellar rays lighted the spot
That shone like a mermaid's sub-aqueous grot,
 Or the wonderful fabric of dreams.

No cavern stalactic down under the ground,
With drops of bi-carbonate oozing around
 In pensile, calcareous cones ;
No ice-impearled castle has ever been found
With iridal colors so gorgeously crowned
 As this — of prismatical stones.

As if all the rainbows that ever the sun
Had kissed into being were blended in one,
 An arcade of frostwork and dews ;
So gleamed in transparency filaments spun
By embryo artists — as chromos begun
 Abounding in scintillant hues.

Not like the renowned Coliseum of Rome,
A structure upreared from foundation to dome
By men who wore Slavery's gyves ;
But Liberty's sons, as if building a home,
Toiled day after day — as with honey and comb
Do busy bees labor in hives.

A city-full poured through its glistening halls,
Its gelid, pellucid, and argentine walls
Where traffickers offered their wares ;
Tobogganers awkward in blankets and shawls
Who struggled as if with Niagara Falls
Ascending the slippery stairs.

With flambeau, and rocket, and oriflamme bright,
The Fire King leading his cohorts by night,
In uniform scarlet and gold,
Besieged the Ice Monarch who ordered aright,
And routed with snow-balls the enemy's light
And left them in darkness and cold.

The King of the carnival pompously grown
From homage to him so obsequious shown,
Like Xerxes reviewing his fleet,
In royal habiliments sat on his throne
And issued commands in imperious tone
To vassalry bowed at his feet.

The festival Queen in bewitching array,
As fair as a maid of Circassia to-day,

With cheeks like twin roses aglow,
Environed by courtiers and satellites gay
Regina, the favorite, tempered her sway
As Helios softens the snow.

* * * * *

The fête had gone by — but the sovereign pair,
Who gave to the scene a nobility air,
As icicles lovingly cling
To the roof of a mansion, in happy despair
Had frozen together and fast to the chair —
Borealis and bride! who will have to stay there
Till palaces melt in the spring.

The Sea.

O it was luxury to feel
The vital force renewed,
Upon the Crescent strand to kneel
In silent gratitude,
And drink the ocean-breezes in
Like cordial balm or medicine!

Rejuvenescence in the air,
As borne on pinions fleet,
Betrayed its touch in faces fair
And quick, elastic feet,
And bounding pulse of all in quest
Of comfort, happiness, and rest.

What mystery is like the sea ?
Enhancing Life's brief length
By added years' sweet guarantee,
Recruiting health and strength ;
And yet the yawning sepulcher
For many a happy voyager.

Is it some sad, remorseful throb
Provokes its wild unrest,
That thousands it has dared to rob
Of whom they loved the best,
And thus — O, irony of Fate !
Bereaved ones seeks to compensate ?

As well might we essay to solve
The riddle of the Sphinx,
As from Oceanus evolve
That chain of mystic links
That fetters in obscurity
The dark enigma of the sea.

How strange ! its benefits to crave
With ardent impetus,
Or choose rencounter with the wave,
So often treacherous,
That holds in its profound abyss
A vast, marine necropolis.

The Granger.

Look not upon him with disdain,
Ye dwellers in the town ;
Nor wax facetious as ye mark
His homespun garb of brown.

“Only a Granger,” say the rich,
The favored upper ten ;
And Madame Grundy shuts her doors
On Nature’s noblemen.

“Only a Granger,” scoffing cry
The Wall street bulls and bears,
Who deal in futures, puts, and calls,
Gambling in watered shares,

And scorn the honest son of toil,
Who fills a *useful* place ;
Who grows, but does not corner, wheat,
Nor grinds the poor man’s face.

“Only a Gwanjah,” lisp the dudes,
Those beings minus brains ;
Their habitat, convivial clubs,
Their food, the heads of canes.

“*Only* a Granger,” do you say ?
Aye, but his labor gains
The daily bread of myriads,
And all mankind sustains.

The city's countless denizens,
The lowly and the great,
On him depend ; his toil supports
The fabric of the state.

All honor to the upright men
Who till our acres broad ;
By tens of thousands they marched forth
For country, right, and God,

When dark Secession raised her torch,
With parricidal hand,
To light the fires of civil strife
In our erst-happy land.

And country-nurtured statesmen oft
In halls of Congress sit,
Who yield to none in intellect,
Ability, or wit.

While dudes adjust their single lens,
Or puff the " Cameo,"
The farmer ponders the nation's weal,
E'en as he plies the hoe.

Ye dandies, reverence this man,
In coat of faded hue ;
Ye are not worthy to unloose
His dusty cowhide shoe.

O lady-killer exquisite,
With face devoid of tan,
Go, swing the scythe and drive the plow,
And learn to be a *man*.

HARRY HOWARD.

Somnium Poetae.

Omnia nunc nix arva tegit, premit alba viasque,
Frigidaque glacies ramis dependet ab altis
Arborum, et in fluviis vitrea sub veste teguntur
Undique nunc latices, et hiems superat mala terram.
Sed mihi jam veris signa adparent venientis ;
Collibus ecce caput se evolvens tollit ad auras
Flos violae, dulcis melioris nuntius horae.
Tum laetus tam dulce poeta patore fenestrae
Spectans, somnit agros segetum messi locupletes ;
Junix candida arat, pellit genialis arator ;
Querci sub patera recubans umbra, ipse tuetur,
Cum volucres cantant, et formosissima Tellus.
Atque procul pastor pecus amplum ducit in arvis,
Errando atque canit modulamina rustica avena.
Et — sed nunc subito glaciei moles cadit alto
Ab tecto, factusque fragor, monet atque poetam
Jam esse hiemem, nondumque aestatis tempus adesse ;
Evigilat, piget et vatem, versatque fenestra.

HARRY HOWARD.

"Sugaring Off."

Round after round in rugged tramp,
 But wholesome discipline,
By sturdy hands about the camp
 The sap was gathered in ;
When one perspiring, very red,
 And sitting on a trough,
"To close the season," so he said,
 Proposed to "sugar off."

Beyond the farm-house still and white,
 Beyond the poplar bars,
A lignous pile emitted light
 That paled the brightest stars ;
Where caldrons hung, like those of which
 The Bard of Avon told,
With ebullition contents rich
 Above the flame of gold.

A score or more of beaux and belles
 On toothsomeness intent,
Like buzzing bees in flower-dells
 Inhaled the maple scent ;
Who danced around in impish glee
 Like witches in Macbeth,
And stirred the sweet consistency,
 And laughed till out of breath.

In fidget spells, by trial sips
Of liquid boiling hot,
How many burned their saucy lips ;
And pouted at the thought
Of strips of plaster stretched across
Each rosy orifice,
Or sighed in secret o'er the loss
Of some prospective kiss.

Anon, the mass like melted wax
Electrified their hopes,
Who followed out diversion's tracks
By making candy ropes ;
That by mysterious lasso twirls —
How, record never tells —
Glued ribbon-bows and spiral curls
To overcoat lapels.

How many lads in languid pose
Leaned later 'gainst the trees,
The sticky syrup on their clothes,
The 'lasses on their knees —
That is, the sugar ! — never yet
Hath language run so fast —
But one can never quite forget
What happened decades past.

Such fun beyond the curfew hour
A Puritan might rue,

Or like an unbelieving Giaour
 Deny the statement true ;
 But so it was — till *Pater* (and
 A lantern) caused surprise,
 Who quite broke up the festive band
 And captured their supplies.

O, with a wild remembrance-thrill
 My heart in rapture beats !
 The egg-shell cups again I fill
 With granulated sweets,
 And mold in scalloped patty-pans
 Delicious maple cakes
 As yellow as the golden sands,
 But pure as snowy flakes.

I've been, as by the drift of chance,
 A wanderer for years
 From those delightful, happy haunts
 That memory endears ;
 But never life hath been so bright
 As when, upon a trough
 With Peter Stump, one blessed night
 I helped to “sugar off.”

* * * * *

And for *his* sake, where'er he is,
 This rustic ode I pen
 To stir his risibilities ;
 The jolliest of men,

Though Prelate of the Holy See ;
Who dreams sometimes I know
Of sweetness, sap, and sorcery —
O, years and years ago !

Life.

Like over-wrought embroideries
In dainty handicraft embossed,
Producing strange complexities
In which the true design is lost,
So life a tangled fabric is,
With threads half-hidden, linked and crossed.

We all are weaving day by day,
Like ancient, notable housewife,
In our unskilled, imperfect way,
'Mid cares and disappointments rife,
Rude ells of fretwork to portray
At last the finished web of life.

But proud success for which we yearn
Is often hid in trembling doubt ;
And when the cause we would discern
Of hinderance, or threatened rout,
We find that some unlucky turn
The woof of years has raveled out.

A Gobelin Tapestry.

[Of the time of Louis Quatorze.]

O, had this royal, rich relique —
This rare *chef-d'œuvre*, odd and old —
Volition, and a tongue to speak,
What history it might unfold !
'Twould take us back to gilded days
Of dissolute, imperial France ;
When Moliere wrote his classic lays,
And Fenelon his grand romance.

O, time ! how nearly memory fails
To trace its great antiquity —
Revert to Fontainebleau, Versailles,
And Louis, lord of luxury !
A sovereign's gift, it may have graced
The palace home of Maintenon ;
Or gratified the cultured taste
Of connoisseurs, long dead and gone.

It forms the imagery of dreams,
Invades the Sabbath sanctity,
Disturbs sweet solitude, and seems
Like some hobgoblin mystery ;
The present fades and slips away,
A panoramic view unrolls
Of lords and ladies, good and gay,
Or passion-fed, salacious souls.

Then handed down from sire to son
Along the Bourbon dynasty,
What admiration hath it won
In many a court festivity !
Perchance it hung behind the throne
'Mid velvet arras in a scene
Where, like an orient vision, shone
The fair proportions of a queen.

Was e'er a penny spent in alms
That this embellished treasure cost —
Per favor dropped within the palms
That o'er and o'er its meshes crossed ?
For hands that could so deftly trace
A pattern thus complex and quaint,
Might join the ends of raveled lace,
Or Love's unconscious blushes paint.

Did some poor maid, without renown,
Toil on the fabric late and long —
Whose pittance bought her wedding gown,
Its price a sixpence and a song ?
Or does it breathe of cloister-cells
Where pensive virgins, hid for years,
With faces white as immortelles
Their rosaries told through silent tears ?

Or in those far-famed factories,
Where Gobelin artificers

Knew naught of hard monopolies
Except as ill-paid laborers,
Was bright young manhood's supple strength
Through weary seasons robbed of grace,
Embossing one brief ell in length —
But one that time should not efface?

But why should crowds so frantic be
Before this antiquated gem —
As 'twere a charm, phylactery,
Or sort of amulet for them?
Have not our busy dames and belles
With cunning fingers wrought to-day,
By feminine, spasmodic spells,
In just as true, artistic way?

Look at our screens and crazy quilts,
Our lambrequins hung everywhere,
The reptile tribe, or birds on stilts
That decorate our gay *portieres*;
Embroidered dogs on ottomans,
So natural that, in the dark,
As faithful household guardians
They ever serve — but never bark.

O modern art! decry the thought
That more than we our grandmas knew;
Or that our predecessors caught
Diviner rays — it isn't true! —

And though in raptures eloquent,
And rhapsodies we oft engage,
'Tis not o'er skill more excellent —
But that it bears the stamp of age.

Then, reverend seniors, hear our lay !
Be not like doleful pessimists,
Lugubrious while growing gray,
For loving loyalty insists
Upon our honest guarantee ;
'Tis worth the token — be consoled —
For, like this ancient tapestry,
We'll honor you — because you're old !

Beautiful Eyes.

As clear as lovely Lake Tahoe !
That, like a mirror's polished face,
Reveals pure depths where one may trace
The shrubs and flowers that round it grow ;
So, as in pantomimic show,
Within their liquid fathoms glow
Quick fancies darting to and fro.

Like opals, changeable to view,
Their matchless beauty is displayed
In shifting tints of light and shade ;

As if prismatic drops of dew
Had let the golden sunlight through,
And intercepting rays of blue
Took each its own cerulean hue.

Anon they flash like orbs of jet,
As dark as night, of velvet black ;
And, like a gipsy's, might hurl back
The charge of saucy, gay coquette
From some bewildered amoret ;
Then, gray and brown together met,
Grow angel-like in meek regret.

As radiant as diamonds bright
In exquisite *eadean de noce* ;
A bridal token less verbose,
More pleasing unto sense and sight
Of one upon her marriage-night,
Than tomes of missives pink and white
That loving thought could e'er indite.

A matron's are those love-lit eyes ;
Within whose fringe-encircled spheres
A soulful, wistful look appears,
That seems to blend, in meaning wise,
The glory and the sweet surprise
Of something seen beyond the skies —
The mystery of Paradise.

Divining-stars ! they haunt me so,
And secrets seem to read as well ;
For things I never meant to tell
To anybody, friend or foe,
Maybe that happened long ago,
Are pictured in them — just as though
Some solemn certainty they know.

A Day in Ancient Rome.

(A Recitation before the Chantauqua Circle.)

Come, let us leave these narrow bounds
That circumscribe the sphere of home,
And soar away beyond the sea —
And spend a day in ancient Rome !

In far Italia's sunny land
Where roll the Arno and the Po,
Where turrets rise from castles grand
Beside the Tiber's rapid flow.

O, mists of buried years, roll back !
And bring, in retrospective glance,
The Roman epoch and an age
That time and distance but enhance.

A few rude shepherds on a hill,
Their huts and herds, an earthen wall
That hemmed them in from troublous foes —
Let these the dawn of Rome recall.

Yet, from this petty fortress sprung
A mighty nation that compelled
All Italy to own her sway,
And distant peoples subject held ;

That grew in splendor, wealth, and power,
Became the home of cultured art,
And on the world's arena played
For centuries the sovereign's part.

Great deities have been dethroned,
Their thunderbolts are harmless now ;
And so, within their temple walls,
We stand on Campidoglio's brow,

And cast expectant, rapturous eyes
Far to the distant Orient —
Where Helios in splendor rose,
Whose orbit spans the firmament.

Here at our feet the Forum lies,
Where Cicero with silver tongue
Entranced the wondering populace,
Who on his thrilling accents hung.

This stony pavement tessellate
Re-echoed once victorious tread
Of conquering armies from the wars
Where Caesar, or where Pompey, led.

Who laid the trophies of success
Down at the feet of Jupiter ;
For ignorant, blind devotees
Of heathen gods those ancients were.

On yonder cliff precipitous
That shadowed the transgressor's gate,
The traitoress, Tarpeia, met
At Sabine hands her wretched fate.

We tread the Corso's busy street,
That once triumphal arches spanned ;
The Campus Martius wander o'er —
For promenade and pleasure planned.

Down through the great Pantheon's dome
The golden sunlight falls aslant ;
Like Heaven's benediction on
A scene that seraphim might haunt.

Before yon Colosseum's pile
Might wandering Jews let fall a tear
For captives of their hapeless race
Compelled those mighty walls to rear.

Oh, were those ruins animate,
And could their history unfold,
A wondering world would pause to hear
Their record of the days of old !

We should forget this sordid life,
Our dearest hopes remember not,
To revel in that glorious past
With such associations fraught.

The Via Sacra we might walk
With Horace, our companion-guide —
Or Virgil, whose enchanting lays
Are our rich legacy and pride.

O, fallen Rome ! thy prestige gone,
Of opulence and splendor shorn,
Till, of thy grandeur, naught remains
Save fragments — shattered and forlorn.

Thus, proudest monuments upreared
By man shall yield to slow decay ;
The sun shall fade, the stars shall fall,
Yea, Heaven and earth shall pass away.

When futile things and scenes of time,
Ephemeral and insecure,
Into oblivion have passed,
Jehovah and his word endure.

Then what to us if funeral pyre
Receive our dust, or crumbling sod —
Or where the soul's abode may be,
If it but safely rest — in God ?

“Mad Rose.”

(A Seaside Episode.)

Her nose was long, but ended in
 A mighty sudden point ;
Not plump, nor plumb above the chin,
 But always out of joint.
Her eyes were serious, dull, and sad ;
 Cosmetics made her fair ;
I knew all this, but then she had
 The most bewitching hair.
Molasses candy color shone
 In each resplendent braid,
That threw the golden light of sun
 Completely in the shade ;
And when in one symmetric coil
 Upon her classic head,
It made the other maidens boil
 With envy — so they said.
As neatly as an artisan
 Might turn a polish-lathe,
I asked her — I, a modest man —
 To go with me — and bathe.
Nay, be not shocked ! this etiquette
 Is practised every day
“Down by the sea” — and yet — and yet —
 They’re proper — in their way.

A Naiad sojourns in this town
 Who like a duck can swim,
 Or like a tub float upside down,
 Who boasts — she learned of *him*.
 Of course 'twould never do on land,
 “*Out-land-ish*” it would be —
 And this is why, we understand,
 So many go to sea.
 My painted boat at anchor lay,
 A jaunty craft, but frail,
 So, apropos, to close the day
 We took an evening sail.
 A bit of caution going, down,
 She gave me on the stair :
 “Now, Fred ! look out ! if I should drown,
 Don’t grab me by the hair !”
 Her book account eclipsed her nose,
 She was a “million-heir-
 ess ; so I said : My darling Rose,
 I’d grab *you* — anywhere !”
 The sky grew dark, the wind arose,
 The shore lay far beyond ;
 Her face was white as her summer-clothes,
 And mine to correspond.
 The boat gave one tremendous pitch,
 The gale took off her hat —
I never dreamed she wore a switch,
 And made of jute, at that !

And grappled with despairing force,
And sense of urgent need,
At something slippery and coarse
Like rope of ocean-weed.
That "mortal coil" came shuffling off,
And, wriggling like an eel,
It fell into "the water-trough,"
And soon was — *ausgespielt*.
Alas! the pleasure of the day
Was marred — and I am sad —
For my unlucky *fiancée*
Is bald — and *awful mad*!

The Maker of the Bells.

In that land beyond the sea
Where the Pope "a prisoner" dwells,
In a hovel, it may be,
Lived the maker of the bells;
Bells that rang in hospices,
Called St. Bernard monks to prayer
Or to wandering refugees
Spoke of rest and shelter there.

Bells resounding through the halls
Of the stately Vatican,
Or intoned in cottage-walls
Roused the slumbering fisherman;

Bells enshrined in monarchs' homes,
Trembling like their diadems,
Chiming in cathedral domes,
Tolling holy requiems.

Oh ! the sound of wedding-bells
Due to his metallic art,
Mingling oft with funeral knells,
Echoed in his very heart;
Till like friends his bells became,
He could name them one by one,
Listening by fagot-flame
When his day of toil was done.

In the belfry-tower of Fame,
When his masterpiece was placed,
Ruthless the invader came,
His beloved land laid waste ;
Carried to a foreign coast,
Like a stolen captive bird,
His especial pride and boast —
Clearer bells were never heard.

Long he sorrowed, like a child
For a playmate dead and gone,
To his loss unreconciled
Vain it were to labor on ;
So a wanderer he became,
Drifting to the Emerald isle,

Homeless, hopeless, bent in frame,
Never seen or known to smile.

When the clouds of dark despair
Hung above him like a pall,
Sweeter than the voice of prayer,
Louder than muezzin-call,
Over Erin's vale and strand,
Solemn waves of atmosphere
Bore to him, in anthem grand,
Sounds that thrilled his startled ear.

In a moment, as it were,
Time and space and grief forgot,
He, the skilled artificer,
Glimpses of Italia caught ;
Of his workshop and his home,
Children climbing on his knee,
While above St. Peter's dome
Rang his chimes across the sea.

Oh ! it seemed that buried years
All came back as in a dream,
Smiles were born of happy tears
On the banks of Shannon's stream ;
Never music banished pain
Like his bells — of life a part ;
But the sudden joyous strain
Snapped the tension of his heart.

Adele.

Turn where I may her face I see,
So beautiful and bright,
One year ago as it looked to me
Upon her wedding-night ;
And it seems so strange that she is gone,
As a star might fade in orient dawn.

Within the sanctuary aisle,
While music filled the place,
With buoyant step and beaming smile,
In all her queenly grace
I saw her first, a peerless bride ;
A lover's joy, a husband's pride.

Could one of all that brilliant throng,
This bitter day foresee,
Or know how soon the nuptial song
A solemn dirge should be,
Or in that festal atmosphere
Discern the shadow of a bier ?

Into the dear old church once more
She comes — oh, not as then !
The sad-faced preacher walks before,
And hands of reverent men
Bear slowly through a weeping crowd
The bride of death — in her snowy shroud.

O Earth! encumbered everywhere
With dull, unlovely flowers,
Could'st thou not sooner, better spare,
Than this fair bloom of ours,
Some one that tender look nor word
Compassionate had ever stirred?

The world shall miss her pleasantry,
And friends her dear caress,
And days and years to come shall be
So full of weariness;
While cherished hopes in ruins lie,
And cloud-like gloom obscures the sky.

O long as memory shall last,
'Twill bear on sorrow's wave
A thought of her, with blessings past,
In motherhood who gave
Herself, a dying sacrifice,
For a stranger soul from Paradise.

Two Questions.

The world perchance may bear in mind
The query: "What is left behind?"
But angels ask, when all is o'er:
"What deeds of good have gone before?"

Western Justice.

'Twas a session of court in an Occident town,
And the criminal stood in the dock —
The same who had shot a poor Chinaman down —
With a countenance hard as a rock.

As if to dispel every doubt of his guilt,
And strengthen the tragic report,
There lay the Celestial whose blood had been spilt,—
That is, his “remainder” — in court.

The judge, with his sombrero tipped on his head,
And his pantaloons tucked in his boots,
Was bound to “dispense (*with*) the law,” — so he
“That the present predicament suits.” [said —

The statutes were strict and the chances were slim,
And well might the law-breaker quail,
When justice, impartial, accorded to him
A ninety days' sojourn in jail.

“Now, Judge! I'll be hanged—that's a little too steep,
For surely your honor must know
That the life of a coolie, though ever so cheap,
Was never so shockingly low.”

The man of the ermine betrayed no remorse,
But read from the page on his knee :
“The minimum — six months for stealing a horse,
For killing a Chinaman — three !”

The Beautiful Hand.

In thoughtful mood, I sought to trace
My favorite author's plans,
When suddenly before my face
Uprose four shapely hands.

Their merry owners, young and fair,
Purloined my chosen book,
And crowded round my easy-chair
With eager, wistful look,

And begged for my decision calm,
To ease their minds distressed;
Which hand before me bore the palm
Of beauty, o'er the rest.

Divinely, finely-moulded, all
My admiration drew
To native grace, that might enthrall
An artist's fancy, too.

Of one I praised the matchless form,
And its consummate skill,
And clasped another, soft and warm,
With sweet and tender thrill.

The fairy palm that lay in mine
Like some pellucid gem,
Might tempt a monarch to resign
His rightful diadem.

A duchess might have coveted
Such models plump and small ;
And I, by many fancies led,
Could not decide at all.

“My dear young friends,” I made reply,
“The fairest, best, most true
In all this world, becomes so by
The good that it can do.”

“They all are beautiful to me,
And if one does excel
In loveliness, the other three,
My wisdom cannot tell.”

“If, in its honest palm, each day
Some deed of kindness lives,
Go ask the poor, — and they will say
‘It is the hand that gives.’”

Parted.

Peace is born of Pain, and we
Say, submissive, “Thy will be!”
Fate has parted you and me.

To The Stars.

Empyreal lamps, forever bright,
Set in the ebon dome of night
 Like studs of sparkling gold,
What marvels, since Creation's dawn,
Your starry orbs have gazed upon,
 For centuries untold !

Your light shone luminous and warm
Ere Nature rounded into form
 This whirling mundane sphere ;
Ere Luna, with her argent beams,
Bright guardian of a world in dreams,
 Poured forth effulgence clear.

There was a time when sages sought
To win, by ceaseless toil and thought,
 The secrets of the skies ;
To read the destinies of man,
And fathom God's mysterious plan,
 Concealed from mortal eyes.

Oh, later Science laughs to scorn,
As idle superstition, born
 Of ignorance profound,
The ancient astrologic art,
Which swayed the seer's prophetic heart,
 And made him world-renowned.

Great prophets, once accounted wise,
With straining orbs who searched the skies,
 Your plan excites our mirth ;
For we, with lengthened tube of brass
And double lens of convex glass,
 Bring down the stars to earth.

HARRY HOWARD.

A Noted Place.

A picture hangs upon my wall
That fascinates the gaze of all ;
 It is no dream of fancy,
The reveling of fond conceit
In some fantastic brain replete
 With wild extravagancy.

Nor he who dared the scene to limn
Could so have wrought from idle whim,
 But, as by inspiration ;
And gave to common things the glow
That angel fingers might bestow
 On some divine creation.

Who seized the palette of the skies,
And dipped his brush in Eden dyes,
 And caught the sunset glory,
To represent — a waterfall

As issuing from a ragged wall
Of rock with cycles hoary.

A deep ravine, o'ershadowed by
Huge precipices mountain high ;
That stand, as cleft asunder,
Like bold gigantic sentinels
To guard the loveliest of dells,
And Nature's rarest wonder.

A streamlet bent like a shepherd's crook,
Defining many a cozy nook,
Within whose sweet seclusion
May weary toilers, care-distressed,
Enraptured linger, dream, and rest ;
Secure from rude intrusion.

Where cunning elves, in sportive freak,
Might play at charming "hide and seek"
Till, echoing long after,
Should hill and dale return the sound
Of wild hilarity's rebound,
In peals of spirit-laughter.

Might not the amatory Muse
Who in her dainty chalice brews
The wine of fond desire —
The lovely rose-crowned Erato,
In these recesses long ago
Have tuned her magic lyre ?

Whose dulcet strains inspire still,
And touch with Passion's tender thrill,
The scores of youthful lovers
That here, in some sequestered spot,
Remembering each — the world forgot —
One everywhere discovers.

Oh motley crowds of visitors,
As artists, tramps, philosophers,
The place are ever haunting ;
So oft described by tongue and pen
That all the world knows "Watkins' Glen"
Is perfectly enchanting.

Inn-Hospitality.

Within a spacious corridor,
A waiter found a visitor,
His visage drawn into a knot
With mortal rage, because he thought
The management had tricked him ;
"Are you a guest of this hotel?"
Asked the white-aproned Afric swell.
"A guest! No, I'm a victim!"

HARRY HOWARD.

Loved and Lost.

O it was sad to bear her
 (That chill November night)
Away from all who loved her so,
 Away from life and light ;
To hollow a grave in the frozen mold,
And leave her alone in the dark and cold.

As if the dress that robed her
 Like shining nebulae.
When marriage-vows unclosed her lips,
 Now folded rigidly,
And pillows soft her cheeks that press
Could give her warmth's luxuriousness.

O could a ray of sunshine,
 To cheer the long, long hours,
Have struggled through the casket-lid
 With all its wealth of flowers,
And through the satin and the lace,
The iciness 'twould half displace.

Or had it been that morning's
 Delicious light and air
Had bathed her grave a little while,
 Before we laid her there,
We could have turned away with less
Regret, and more of hopefulness.

If day's meridian splendor
Had fallen on her face,
When tearfully we laid her in
Her lowly dwelling-place,
It would have seemed in loving thought
A golden halo round the spot.

Upon the solemn midnight,
From hearts unreconciled,
Goes out the pleading anguish-ery,
Despairing, sad, and wild:
"Beloved, from that unseen shore
Come back, come back to us once more."

O heaven must be brighter
For one like summer's rose
Who perished in her loveliness,
And sleeps beneath the snows ;
But, in immortal grace and bloom,
Who lives again beyond the tomb.

Our Fault.

If never in our skies appear
Refulgent gleams the heart to cheer,
And make the sombre world aglow ;
If Life is always dull and drear,
'Tis just because we make it so.

“The Mind Cure.”

Oh, who knows what the “mind cure” is?
The “latest craze” in remedies

That everybody’s trying —
For if the rumors half be true
Of all that it is said to do,
’Twill save a world of dying.

“The age of miracles is past!
A nine-days’ wonder — ’twill not last!”

So says the horrid skeptic;
But, on the other hand, we find
A host of maimed, and halt, and blind,
Consumptive and dyspeptic,

Of rich and poor, of high and low,
Who’ve tried it, and who ought to know,
Declare there’s virtue in it;
They say it beats their puzzled brains
How it can banish ills and pains,
In less than half a minute.

It takes a “crank,” as full of kinks
As a wire-mattress is of links,
With aching joints rheumatic,
And straightens every tangle out;
And makes him run and leap and shout
In sudden joy ecstatic.

Suppose a stomach's knotted up
Until it can't retain a sup
 Of anything (but whisky),
Just seek the “mind-magician's” haunt,
He says, “Eat anything you want!”
 Is not this rather risky?

A pair of squinting, crooked eyes
That never saw the azure skies
 But as a cross-barred vision,
With one unbiased, air-line glance
Straightway transforms the broad expanse
 Into a scene Elysian.

They say a twisted, curved back-bone,
That like the letter S has grown,
 Can be a thing of beauty;
Each vertebra its place slip in,
Without a drop of medicine —
 But just from sense of duty.

Now, this is certainly benign!
For who could live without a spine —
 A reservoir for marrow?
The plan should anybody try,
He very soon would occupy
 A space secure — but narrow.

Old foggy doctors of the town
Would dearly love to put it down,
As humbug — for the fact is,
They find “their occupation’s gone,”
As patients everywhere are drawn
To this new-fangled practice.

A journal, too, renowned and wise.
The noble “mind-cure” classifies
With modern “shams, delusions.”
With “woman suffrage, come-out schemes”
Of some fanatic’s phantom dreams —
Oh, what absurd conclusions!

We don’t see why an editor
Should ever cast a harmless slur
On innocent diversions;
But greatly fear — the thought is sad —
That “too much learning makes him mad.”
And fond of mild aspersions.

What does the “mind-cure doctor” do?
Why, not a thing but look at you,
As if he were enchanted;
And presently, your stubborn will
Is conquered by his little (?) bill,
Which in your face is flaunted.

O matchless "mind-cure" mystery !
Let not the bond of faith in thee
 A ruthless hand dissever ;
For they who once thy name maligned,
Are "sitting, clothed, in their right mind,"
 And hope to live — forever.

O Wear a Smiling Face.

O wear a smiling face,
 No matter what your sorrow !
Let not the doleful trace
Of private woes displace
The sunny glance, nor chase
 Bright hours into the morrow !

And speak a cheerful word,
 E'en though your heart be breaking !
Like happy song of bird,
It may revive when heard
Some drooping spirit, stirred
 To depths of bitter aching.

It is not ours to know
 How oft a nobler yearning,
In some sad life below,
Is born of that sweet glow
The countenance doth show
 With love-light ever burning.

A Christmas Fowl.

Five mortal hours I cooked that chicken,
And then sat down and cried ;
For when a fork I tried to stick in,
It never pierced its hide.

A tougher biped strutted never
Upon a barn-yard plain ;
I'd like to wring its neck forever,
And would, if I had it again.

I put in soda, salt and savor-
y stuff, till nearly dark,
To reconstruct that ancient flavor,
That smelt like Noah's ark.

And waited — I, a starving sinner —
Till six o'clock at night ;
And ordered, long before the dinner,
The paraffine — for light.

I half-expired, no longer able
To bear such emptiness ;
And just revived when to the table
It came — in evening dress.

But when the platter took its form on
Its horrid eye-teeth showed ;
And just as true as I'm a Mormon,
That chicken got up and crowed.



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